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AUTHOR	Grigsby, Camilla
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ABSTRACT

The Joint System Social Studies Project provided students from the public and parochial school systems with an innovative ethnic studies curriculum developed during joint staff meetings. Intersystem cooperation and communication was encouraged through this joint undertaking. Twenty public and parochial school teachers participated in monthly staff development meetings for training in ethnic and racial cultures and in current social studies approaches. A curriculum guide was developed and instructional materials were produced and identified. The ethnic studies curriculum was implemented in four elementary schools, one junior high school and four senior high schools from each system. Approximately 700 students participated in the project each year. A pre- and post-test attitude survey taken during the third year of the project revealed that there was a significant change in student attitude toward ethnic groups. No significant change was found in student attitude toward racial groups or toward students from the other system. Participating students made significant gains in cultural knowledge. However, few joint classes' needed to stimulate student interaction took place. Increased cooperation and communication between teachers from the public and parochial systems was noted. Resources common to both systems were effectively utilized. (Author/RC)

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JOINT SYSTEM SOCIAL STUDIES

1972 - 1975

Report Number 7617

Project Evaluators: Edward Lopatin

Camilla Grigsby

Report Prepared by: Camilla Grigsby

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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

July 1975

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JOINT SYSTEM SOCIAL STUDIES

The Joint System Social Studies project provides: 1) staff development for teacher participants from public and parochial schools 2) an innovative ethnic studies curriculum for students from both systems.

RATIONALE

The initial Joint System Social Studies proposal was based on the following needs which were identified as a result of meetings with public and parochial school representatives.

1. To lessen the prevalence of interracial hostility.
2. To lessen the prevalence of inter-ethnic hostility.
3. To lessen the prevalence of inter-group hostility.
4. To continue and expand cooperation between the public and parochial school systems, particularly among administrators, teachers, students, parents and interested community groups.
5. To increase the student's sense of self identity.
6. To strengthen constructive citizenship attitudes.

Both the Public and Archdiocesan School Systems established as a priority the need to develop better interpersonal understanding among students, teachers and administrators of different ethnic and racial backgrounds.

These needs have continued to be addressed during each year of the project's operation.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It was expected that interpersonal relationships among central office personnel and teachers from the Public and Parochial School Systems

would be established as a result of working together on a cooperative program. This would facilitate communication between the two systems.

The project was designed to provide public and parochial school students with an ethnic studies curriculum which utilized a variety of learning materials and techniques. Participating students were expected to gain an awareness and understanding of the cultures of different groups.

PROJECT DESIGN

Approximately 20 public and parochial school teachers were to participate in monthly ongoing staff development aimed at training teachers in diverse ethnic and racial cultures and in current social studies approaches. A curriculum guide would be developed and instructional materials would be produced and identified.

The resulting ethnic studies curriculum would be implemented by the teachers in their home schools, 4 elementary schools, 1 junior high school and 4 senior high schools from each system, either as an elective course or incorporated into the American Studies Program. The ethnic studies program was planned to accommodate approximately 700 students, grades 4-12.

PROJECT EVALUATION

The Joint System Social Studies project has operated with the same objectives for the past three funding years. Consequently, the project evaluation has continued to focus upon the same areas of interest. The evaluation has addressed itself to the following questions:

1. What activities are taking place within the project at both

the staff and student participant levels?

2. Did the project impact significantly upon racial, ethnic, and/or group student attitudes?

3. Did the project impact significantly upon student knowledge of diverse cultures?

IMPLEMENTATION

During the 1972-1973 school year, an ethnic studies curriculum guide was developed by the participating teachers at their monthly staff sessions. This was published and distributed to all School District of Philadelphia junior and senior high schools and to all senior high schools in the Philadelphia Archdiocese during the 1973-1974 school year. As a result of project dissemination, requests for copies of the curriculum guide have continued to be made and filled for numerous educational facilities and school districts.

The monthly staff sessions which were held during the second and third year of the project provided opportunities for the teacher participants to preview ethnic studies materials. Teachers were exposed to various teaching strategies such as the use of role play, simulation games and the multi-media approach. Each teacher was entirely free within the project to choose and experiment with the materials and teaching techniques desired.

During the 1973-1974 school year, over 800 students participated in the ethnic studies classes. During evaluation visits to 13 classrooms, a variety of activities were found to be taking place. Observed teaching techniques and materials included the use of art and food as learning media, the reenactment of religious and ethnic traditions,

independent library research and extensive use of visual aids.

Teachers have reported making field trips to places of interest such as the Italian Market, the Chinese Cultural Center, the Amish Community in Lancaster County, the Smithsonian Institute and the United Nations.

Project reports and the evaluators' observations have confirmed that the ethnic studies curriculum, which has been implemented as a result of the project, is characterized by its experiential orientation, its use of innovative materials and methods, and the high student interest level.

PREVIOUS FINDINGS

Second year evaluation findings cited the implementation of the ethnic studies curriculum as a major strength of the project. Attitude questionnaire results provided evidence of some improvement on the elementary school level in attitude toward ethnic and racial groups. It was observed that joint staff development meetings fostered intersystem staff cooperation.

The lack of consistent, joint activities between participating public and parochial classes was found to be one limitation of the project.

ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES: 1974-1975

Objective 1: Decrease levels of interracial tension among program participants.

The objective was not achieved.

A Student Attitude Questionnaire was developed by the evaluators to assess change in attitude, pre and posttest, in racial, ethnic, and group

areas. Appendix A contains a copy of the questionnaire items. The sample included approximately 45% of all program participants in grades 7 through 12, from 9 randomly selected schools. The questionnaire was administered in November, 1974 and again in May, 1975.

Three unidentified subtests were included in the questionnaire: ethnic items 1-10; racial, items 11-20; group, items 21-30. Students were asked to respond to items on a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging between the extremes of strongly agree to strongly disagree. An item analysis was done on the questionnaire to determine inter-item correlation within subtest areas. Twenty-two of the original 30 items were retained as reliable indicators of student attitude. The scores of the position responses for these items were summed and averaged, yielding total subtest scores (Table 1) and item scores.

Mean item scores on the racial attitude pretest indicated that only a minimum amount of racial bias was originally present. With a scale score range of 1 (low racial tolerance) to 5 (high racial tolerance) the average item score was 3.94. There was no statistically significant difference between average racial subtest scores on the pre and posttest.

It was postulated that by assessing change in racial attitude, assumptions could be made regarding the program's impact upon levels of interracial tension. Because the instrument data provides no evidence of attitude change, it must be inferred that levels of interracial tension remained stable.

Objective 2: Decrease the levels of inter-ethnic tension among program participants.

The objective was achieved.

Average item scores on the ethnic attitude pretest ($\bar{X}$=3.43) revealed that a moderate amount of ethnic bias existed.

Comparison of pre and posttest results (Table 1) on the ethnic subtest of the Student Attitude Questionnaire found that students had significantly more ($p<.01$) ethnic tolerance following the posttest assessment.

It can be concluded that increased ethnic tolerance would decrease levels of inter-ethnic tension among program participants.

Objective 3: Decrease levels of inter-group tension among program participants.

The objective was not achieved.

For evaluation purposes, the term "inter-group" refers to the public and parochial school systems.

Initial bias toward other groups was assessed by the pretest as moderate. The average item response was 3.64 on the scale of 1 - 5.

Comparison of pre and posttest results (Table 1) on the group subtest of the Student Attitude Questionnaire found that students had significantly less ($p<.01$) group tolerance following the posttest assessment.

It can be inferred that inter-group tension among program participants could not have decreased, as attitudes proved to be less tolerant at the end of the project year.

Objective 4: Increase and expand cooperation and communication between public and parochial systems.

The objective was partially attained.

There was frequent cooperation and communication between public

and parochial staff participants. However, less interaction occurred between students in the two systems.

Records kept by the project administrators and reports submitted by 11 of the 18 participating teachers (Intersystem Participation Questionnaire, Appendix B) were used to assess intersystem cooperation and communication during the 1974-1975 school year. Teacher [illegible]dicated that there was extensive sharing of audiovisual equipment [illegible]als and other supplementary curriculum aides. The monthly staff meetings provided an opportunity for teachers to coordinate their materials, assuring optimum use of those available.

Observations made during visits by the evaluator to two staff meetings confirmed that cooperation and communication took place between the two systems. The monthly staff development sessions provided an opportunity for teachers in both systems to work together. During these meetings, teachers were able to share common concerns and experiences with others.

Responses to the Intersystem Participation Questionnaire revealed that joint class activities occurred infrequently. There were several shared field trips. Two Senior High classes co-produced a holiday program. However, no classes held regularly scheduled activities with those from the other system. Discussions with teachers revealed that logistical problems such as distance between schools and scheduling student time prevented joint activities from taking place more frequently.

Objective 5: Provide for more effective utilization of common resources of both public and parochial systems.

The objective was attained.

The inter-system communication and cooperation facilitated by the monthly staff meetings resulted in teachers being made aware of community resources available to them. Representatives from organizations such as Aspira, and the American Jewish Committee made presentations at the sessions. Teachers followed up on this by inviting people from these organizations to visit their classrooms. Institutions such as the Indian Museum of the University of Pennsylvania and the Chinese Cultural Center informed teachers through staff sessions of offerings for students.

Objective 6: Enable participants to gain an awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity of the city, state, national and international communities by:

(a) examining the melting pot concept;

(b) examining the problems of cultural diversity;

(c) examining the promises of cultural diversity;

The objective was attained.

An Ethnic Studies Questionnaire (Appendix C) was developed by the evaluators to be used as a pre- posttest measure of cultural knowledge. The test was administered to approximately 150 fifth and seventh grade students during November and May of the 1974-1975 school year.

A two-tailed t test revealed that students scored significantly higher ($p<.01$) on the posttest than on the pretest. This indicates that JSSS students made substantial gains in their knowledge of diverse cultures.

Evaluators' visits to 13 project sites, grades 5-12, found that curriculum content centered on the examination and comparison of ethnic and racial cultures. Within the classroom, student involvement methods and affective techniques were used to increase understanding and awareness of

the problems and promises of cultural diversity. Field trips to ethnic neighborhoods and interviews with representatives of various cultural groups contributed to the students' awareness of diverse cultures.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Joint System Social Studies Project was intended to provide students from the public and parochial school systems with an innovative ethnic studies curriculum developed during joint staff meetings. This joint undertaking would facilitate intersystem cooperation and communication at all levels.

The project was partially successful in attaining its objectives. There was a significant change in student attitudes toward ethnic groups. Effective utilization was made of resources common to both systems. Participating students made significant gains in cultural knowledge. Increased cooperation and communication between teachers from the public and parochial systems was noted. However, few joint class activities needed to stimulate student interaction took place.

No evidence was found that there was a decrease in student bias toward racial groups or toward students from the other system. Several factors could have intervened in using the evaluation instrument to measure attitude change in these areas. Significant attitude change often requires long periods of time to effect. The attitude questionnaire was administered on a relatively short term basis. Therefore, slowly evolving change would not be detected. Baseline attitude, established by the pretest results, was found to be less prejudicial than anticipated. This restricted the range in which positive attitude change could be indicated.

It was noted that there was a significant increase in the amount of student bias toward those from the other system. One possible explanation for this concerns the students' experiential background during times of pre and posttesting.

When the pretest was administered, it was possible that students had relatively no experience with other-system students. Therefore, item responses were made from a more abstract point of view. During the course of the year, a very limited amount of contact was made which, although not enough to produce positive intersystem student communication, did enable the students to respond to the post attitude questionnaire from a more personalized perspective. These more personalized responses would in all probability reflect more bias than the initial, non-personalized ones.

The success of the project is best reflected in the caliber of the ethnic studies curriculum developed and implemented by the participating teachers. The project has provided students with an exciting course of study centered around numerous activities and incorporating progressive learning methods.

The success of Joint System Social Studies was achieved through the combined efforts of capable project administrators and teachers committed to the project's goals.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF NOVEMBER AND MAY RESULTS ON STUDENT ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

Subtest	Given as	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	t
Ethnic	Pretest (N=306)	15.44	4.41	2.65*
	Posttest (N=295)	17.43	12.24	
Racial	Pretest (N=306)	13.21	3.51	.0067
	Posttest (N=295)	13.22	9.27	
Group	Pretest (N=306)	22.79	6.31	5.54*
	Posttest (N=295)	18.19	12.84	

*Statistically significant at the .01 level

JOINT SYSTEM SOCIAL STUDIES

STUDENT ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS: For each statement, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by marking the answer sheet:

1. strongly agree
2. agree
3. not sure
4. disagree
5. strongly disagree

There are no right or wrong answers, so respond to each item as honestly as you can.

1. There is one ethnic group, in particular, whose people are not job-worthy.
2. Some ethnic groups are frightening.
3. There are some ethnic groups whose members are bad tempered by nature.
4. All ethnic groups have their sneaky people.
5. There is one superior ethnic group.
6. There are people of every ethnic group who are creative.
7. Some ethnic groups are not very bright because of the ridiculous values they hold.
8. The people of one ethnic group, in particular, are bad citizens because of the values they hold.
9. People of one ethnic group may hold many different values.
10. The values of an ethnic group are a measure of the intelligence of the people of that group.
11. I would enjoy visiting places in Philadelphia inhabited largely by a racial group different from my own.
12. I could not have a good friend from another race.
13. I would prefer different races going to their own schools.
14. I would feel uncomfortable if a good friend of mine were dating someone from another race.
15. I would not mind if a family of a different race moved next door to me.
16. All racial groups deserve to be respected.

17. You have to act tough to other racial groups to show them you're not afraid.

18. It would bother me if the principal of my school were of a different race than my own.

19. I would not mind engaging in sports activities which included members of a different race.

20. Students who refer to their racial background during lessons are usually trying to stir up trouble.

*21. I wouldn't mind spending a week in a (public, parochial) school as an exchange student.

*22. (Public, parochial) school students are usually so disciplined that it's not possible to enjoy learning in parochial schools.

*23. It would bother me if some of my classes were shared with (public, parochial) school students.

*24. I feel uneasy walking near a (public, parochial) school during school time.

*25. Contact with (public, parochial) schools will have a harmful effect on the values of public school students.

*26. Most (public, parochial) school students would ignore us if we tried to be friendly.

27. The only reason Catholic people go to parochial school is to get away from public school.

28. (Public, parochial) school students treat us with respect.

29. Public and parochial school students have very little in common.

*30. I would rather have as little to do with (public, parochial) school students as possible.

*Two forms of this questionnaire were administered; one appropriate for public school students, one for parochial school students. Where indicated, items used either the word public or parochial dependent upon the form.

INTERSYSTEM PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR JOINT SYSTEMS SOCIAL STUDIES

NAME

SCHOOL

1. Please list all joint public-parochial activities in which your class has participated thus far during the 1974-1975 school year. If your class meets regularly with another, please indicate the number of meetings which have taken place this year.

2. Please list any instances in which you shared physical facilities between systems during the 1974-1975 school year.

3. Please list any instances in which cross-system staff sharing took place during the 1974-1975 school year.

JOINT SYSTEMS SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

ETHNIC STUDIES QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Immigrants came to America for:

   a. religious freedom.

   b. better jobs.

   c. a better life.

   d. all of the above.

2. Which one of the following is <u>not</u> an ethnic food?

   f. Spaghetti.

   g. Milk.

   h. Bagels.

   j. Sauerkraut.

3. Chinatown is:

   a. the oldest community in Philadelphia.

   b. an ethnic neighborhood.

   c. located in Northeast Philadelphia.

   d. none of the above.

4. Crispus Attucks was:

   f. a Black-American killed at the Boston Massacre.

   g. an outstanding Norwegian immigrant.

   h. the Senator from Massachusetts.

   j. a well-known Irish actor.

5. Many Jewish immigrants who came to New York City in the early 20th Century went to work:

   a. in the coal mines.

   b. in the clothing industry.

   c. for the New York Police Force.

   d. for the United States Government.

6. An ethnic group consists of people who:

   f. speak the same language.

   g. attend the same house of worship.

   h. practice the same customs.

   j. all of the above.

7. The words sombrero, adios and mucho are:

   a. Italian.

   b. Spanish.

   c. Jewish.

   d. Polish.

8. Most immigrants who came to the United States:

   f. gave up all of their ethnic customs.

   g. quickly achieved success.

   h. faced prejudice and discrimination.

   j. returned to their native country within a year.

9. The polka, hora and cha cha are examples of:

   a. ethnic foods.

   b. ethnic holidays.

   c. ethnic dances.

   d. ethnic cloths.

10. One of the main reasons that Chinese-Americans live in Chinatown is because:

   f. they like Chinese food.

   g. they feel more comfortable being with their own kind.

   h. they like the scenery in the neighborhood.

   j. the street signs are in Chinese.

11. Most ethnic groups in this country:

    a. have rejected their ethnic customs.

    b. are proud of their ethnic background.

    c. do not consider themselves full Americans.

    d. none of the above.

12. The religion of most Puerto Ricans is:

    f. Catholic.

    g. Protestant.

    h. Jewish.

    j. none of the above.

13. Which of these groups living in Philadelphia is an ethnic group?

    a. Firemen.

    b. Americans.

    c. Protestants.

    d. Italians.

14. The reason people from an ethnic group often stay together is because:

    f. they have a lot in common.

    g. they speak the same language.

    h. other people sometimes try to hold them down.

    j. all of the above.

15. Which statement is true of most ethnic groups in this country?

    a. They are full U. S. citizens.

    b. The government does not give them equal rights.

    c. If they do wrong, they can be sent back to the "old" country.

    d. They don't really consider this country their home.

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